

Both of Them by Aibakaneesh

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Fluff, Multi

Language: English

Characters: Jonathan Byers, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Jonathan Byers/Steve Harrington/Nancy Wheeler

Status: Completed

Published: 2016-09-05

Updated: 2016-09-05

Packaged: 2022-03-31 22:54:36

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 1,470

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Maybe it has something to do with the brush with death. Steve never considered himself a philosophical man, but when faced down with his own mortality he's decided to be a little less of an asshole and more content to follow what his heart wants.

Apparently his heart wants Nancy Wheeler and Jonathan Byer.

Both of Them

Author's Note:

Haven't written in a while and this doesn't have much of a plot, but I had the ending scene in my head and couldn't get it out so I just wrote it.

For weeks after the Incident, as they called it, Steve and Nancy keep a careful distance from Jonathan and his family. Nancy insists it is so Joyce and Jonathan could savor the return of Will. Steve is just happy the nightmare is over and normalcy can settle back over his and Nancy's relationship.

With Nancy no longer acting *weird* from fighting child-snatching government monsters and having kicked Tommy H. and Carol to the curb, he and Nancy settle into teenage, domestic bliss.

But the weeks stretch into months. Christmas passes with New Year's soon after. The school year resumes lacklusterly and Nancy begins to stare longingly across the lunchroom. Steve follows her gaze a few times, sometimes catching the blur of Jonathan Byer's flannel disappearing around a corner.

"We made a good team," he says one afternoon after Jonathan brushes past them in the hallway on the way out of school.

"What's that?" Nancy asks, distracted by the stack of notecards she's trying to organize.

"Me, you, and Byers," Steve says. "Back then. When that thing—"

"Yeah," Nancy cuts him off with a shudder. She still has nightmares, she's admitted to him. "I guess we were. What about it?"

"You two spent a lot of time together, then. I guess I was wondering if you missed him." He rubs his nose self-consciously when Nancy turns a harsh gaze on him.

"God dammit, Steve. Are you kidding me right now? If you're still jealous just because we were fighting off that *thing* that took Barb and

Will, so help me—“

“Not what I meant! I meant, like, should we invite him to hang out or something?”

Nancy's face softens into something Steve can't really decipher. And that's how Jonathan becomes their reluctant third-wheel. Steve isn't really sure how Nancy convinces him to join them at lunch or to the movies one Friday night, but he suspects it has something to do with how in love Jonathan is with Nancy.

Whatever hard meanness Jonathan had taken on when his brother had disappeared is gone. He's returned to his quiet, withdrawn self. Steve represses the urge to roll his eyes and call him a creep. It's an old habit that he wished would die easier. Especially because Jonathan *isn't* a creep now that they're hanging around each other. He's quiet, sure, but he's got flawless taste in punk rock and a sarcastic streak deeper than anyone Steve has ever met. Steve hates the way Jonathan flinches when he throws an arm around his shoulders, but finds it hilarious the way, over time, the flinches stop and are replaced with heavily put-upon sighs.

And Nancy adores him. She is happier when it's the three of them. Steve would be jealous except he isn't. He can't explain it. He just isn't. Maybe it has something to do with the brush with death. Steve never considered himself a philosophical man, but when faced down with his own mortality he's decided to be a little less of an asshole and more content to follow what his heart wants.

Apparently his heart wants Nancy Wheeler and Jonathan Byer. Both of them.

Winter thaws into Spring and the three of them are nearly inseparable. When Joyce's car breaks down and Jonathan lets her take his back, Steve is idling on the front drive the next morning with Nancy to give him a lift to school without anyone even asking. They share pizzas and sleep on each other's couches and Jonathan has even been seen wearing Steve's baseball jackets. Steve and Jonathan help Nancy study in the library. Jonathan and Nancy watch Steve at

baseball practice from the field bleachers. Steve and Nancy watch movies entangled in each other's arms late at night when Jonathan can't be with them and both of them feel his missing presence like holes in their hearts.

They plan out their intervention carefully. Nancy scripts it like she writes her essays, carefully planning arguments and providing proof that what she and Steve are suggesting isn't entirely crazy. Steve rolls his eyes at her and tries to distract her with kisses like he does when they study. He's entirely confident that he can skate through this on pure charisma like he's been doing for three years of high school.

On the first day of summer break before their senior year, Steve drives himself and Nancy across town to the Byer's residence. Nancy notices Will's bike is missing from where it is usually dumped by the porch when they come by to visit and she sighs a bit in relief. Fewer distractions will make the plan run smoothly. They'll sit Jonathan down at the kitchen table and talk through this like the careful, mature adults they all can be.

Joyce lets them in with a tired grin. She's wearing her supermarket uniform and clasping a wristwatch with a bit of rushed urgency.

"Jonathan's in his room listening to music. Go on in. There's leftovers in the fridge if you kids get hungry. I get off work around ten; call the store if you need anything!" She's out the door as soon as they clear the threshold, running late.

Steve gives Nancy a raised-eyebrow look and she grabs his hand, squeezing it but needing the comfort herself. A rumble of drums and bass guitar floats down the hall and she leads the way towards Jonathan's bedroom. Nancy knocks politely and waits. When there is no response she pushes open Jonathan's door and the muffled music pounds louder in the room.

Jonathan is sprawled out on his stomach, the wrong way across his bed. His arms are folded under his head, knees bent and socked feet resting between the bars of his headboard. A magazine lays crumpled on the floor in front of him. He's fast asleep, back rising with each

pull of breath and ghosting out his opened mouth in a light snore. His brow is relaxed and Nancy realizes she's rarely seen such peace on his face. Even in the months since Will's rescue, the anxiety that exuded Jonathan's being held his muscles with such tension that he never seemed truly relaxed.

The realization his Nancy guiltily and she tries to back out of the room. Steve doesn't budge. He pushes the door open farther and nudges Nancy forward. He closes the door behind him even though they are alone in the house. They each go around different sides of the bed. Steve plonks down on the mattress and leans down over Jonathan's upturned face.

Jonathan jerks awake immediately, eyes snapping open.

"Taking a nap, Jonny-boy?" Steve waggles his eyebrows and slaps a hand on Jonathan's shoulder. A flush crosses Jonathan's face quickly and he rolls onto his side, still half asleep and disoriented. His entire body goes ridged in carefully practiced defense. Nancy quickly sits on his other side and her hand finds his arm reassuringly. Jonathan jumps again, finally seeing her over his shoulder. He relaxes a fraction and Steve takes the chance. "Not a bad idea, I say."

He kicks his shoes off and grabs the pillow from under Jonathan's feet. He makes a big show of fluffing it up and tossing it next to Jonathan's head. He stretches out next to him, fakes a yawn and grins at Nancy. She rolls her eyes at the abandoned plan, but follows suit. Jonathan tries to sit up, but Steve yanks him down again. He finds his head cradled in the crook of Steve's arm and before he can react to that, Nancy has curled up with her head on his chest.

Jonathan stares straight ahead of him at the dingy ceiling. Finally he sucks in a breath.

"What is happening?"

Steve throws his other arm over Jonathan's chest to envelop both him and Nancy in an embrace. Nancy sighs in contentment.

"Is this alright?" she asks.

She is soft against Jonathan's side. Steve is hard and strong on the other. He feels safe and comfortable, nestled in between them.

"Yeah," he says quietly, like anything louder will wake him up from this dream. "This is good."

"Cool," Steve confirms, then hunkers down more resolutely, apparently serious in taking a nap. Jonathan shifts carefully, getting one arm under and around Nancy to hold her softly around the waist. His other hand settles uncertainly on Steve's elbow on his chest. When this doesn't result in Steve shaking him off, calling him queer, and dragging Nancy out of the house, he relaxes and sinks his fingers deeper in the fabric of Steve's jacket.

It's a little too warm with both Steven and Nancy wrapped around him, but Jonathan can't seem to care. The radio breaks from music rotation to local commercials and is a little too loud, but the three of them drift off into a lazy sleep.